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New York

Chairman:	Mr. Wang Yingfan	(China)
Members:	Argentina	Mr. Cappagli
	Bangladesh	Mr. Chowdhury
	Canada	Mr. Fowler
	France	Mr. Levitte
	Jamaica	Miss Durrant
	Malaysia	Mr. Mohammad Kamal
	Mali	Mr. Ag Oumar
	Namibia	Mr. Andjaba
	Netherlands	Mr. van Walsum
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Tunisia	Mr. Ben Mustapha
	Ukraine	Mr. Yel'chenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Jeremy Greenstock
	United States of America	Mr. Holbrooke

Agenda

The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo

Security Council Mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, 4-8 May 2000 (S/2000/416).

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The meeting was resumed at 3.30 p.m.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kobayashi (Japan): I would like to express my gratitude to you, Mr. President, for your leadership in convening this open meeting and thus providing an opportunity for us to present Japan's views on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

I would also like to express my appreciation to the Security Council mission that visited African countries to assess the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. As is evident from the comprehensive report on their meetings with the Presidents of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Rwanda, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe, as well as with several faction leaders, the members of the mission worked tirelessly to advance the peace process.

Our recent experiences in Sierra Leone may cast a negative shadow upon the future course of action that the Security Council may take in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, we must not allow the experiences in Sierra Leone to deter us from resolving the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The ceasefire agreement of 8 April provides an important basis for future peacemaking efforts, although as the subsequent incidents in Kisangani between the forces of Rwanda and Uganda have demonstrated, it is a fragile agreement. I wish to take this opportunity to call upon Rwanda and Uganda to withdraw from Kisangani, in accordance with their agreement. The recent hostilities between their forces are an infringement of the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo and cannot be tolerated.

Our experiences in past peacekeeping operations have taught us that the observance of a ceasefire must be confirmed before a peacekeeping force is deployed. In this connection, Japan fully supports the mission's recommendation that the Secretary-General obtain from the parties to the Lusaka Agreement their commitment, in writing, to maintain the ceasefire and support the deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). In our view, the special meeting of the Political Committee established by the Lusaka Agreement, to be convened in New York next month, would be a very appropriate occasion to obtain such commitment.

I sincerely hope that the international community will extend its strong support to the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, in his efforts to engage the Congolese parties in a national dialogue. Most importantly, he needs solid financial backing. Only half the amount he requires to carry out his planned activities has been pledged so far, and we would like to call upon Member States to do their utmost to help meet the shortfall. For its part, the Government of Japan has contributed $300,000 to the United Nations Trust Fund to assist the facilitation activities of Sir Ketumile Masire. We have recently learned that he has had some difficulty drawing on those funds. We hope that he and the United Nations Secretariat will work together to resolve this issue in a mutually satisfactory manner.

Japan supports the proposition of holding the inter-Congolese dialogue in Kisangani and hopes that preparations for the dialogue will commence as planned by the facilitator. In this connection, I would like to suggest to the facilitator that he consider convening several dialogue meetings at the regional level with a view to consolidating the democratization process at the grass-roots level, for the success of the inter-Congolese dialogue in Kisangani.

Finally, I would like to stress that the international community should focus on the positive achievements made so far in the peace process for the Democratic Republic of the Congo and encourage the parties concerned to implement in an orderly manner the steps that have been agreed upon.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Pakistan. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ahmad (Pakistan): I would, first of all, like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening today's open meeting to review the report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo under the able leadership of Ambassador Richard Holbrooke.

The report submitted by the mission on completion of a whirlwind trip to the region highlights

the challenges that the United Nations faces and the measures that the parties to the conflict and the international community need to take to ensure success in our collective efforts to establish peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

Pakistan believes that the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement is a comprehensive document, and its faithful implementation by all concerned could ensure a lasting peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Pakistan also supports an active involvement of the Security Council in peacekeeping efforts, in accordance with the Ceasefire Agreement, so as to facilitate an early end to the protracted conflict.

One of the preconditions for phase II deployment of peacekeepers, outlined in Security Council resolution 1291 (2000) of 24 February this year, is that "the parties respect and uphold the Ceasefire Agreement" and create a secure environment. We are reassured by the commitment given to the Security Council mission by President Kabila and others that they would facilitate an early deployment of peacekeepers.

While it is essential for all the parties in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to move fast to engage in a sustained dialogue process to consolidate peace, we urge all concerned to ensure implementation of the Lusaka Agreement by facilitating an end to the arms flow from outside and the disarming of all members of the armed groups. All parties to the conflict must also protect human rights and respect international humanitarian law. Progress in these areas will be necessary to ensure the success of the peace process.

By resolution 1291 (2000), the Security Council has given a robust mandate to the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo (MONUC). Acting under Chapter VII of the Charter, the Mission has been given tasks as challenging as in the case of Sierra Leone. These tasks include protecting United Nations and co-located Joint Military Commission (JMC) facilities, installations and equipment; ensuring the security and freedom of movement of its personnel; and protecting civilians who are in imminent danger of physical violence. These are not easy tasks. The Mission should be adequately equipped to fulfil these tasks.

There is a need to focus our attention on effective planning and on deployment of peacekeepers. We would like to emphasize the requirement for a practical concept of operation and configuration of the force in such a manner that it is capable of supporting implementation of the Mission's mandate. The security component of the Mission should also be adequately equipped so that it proves to be an asset for the Mission. Particular note in this regard needs to be taken of the inadequacies of the planning for the deployment of peacekeepers in Sierra Leone, in order not to repeat these problems in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While we agree that trust and confidence are essential for the success of a peacekeeping mission, there is no shortcut to effective preparation. As they say, prevention is better than cure.

As we indicated to the Council on an earlier occasion, Pakistan has committed one battalion group for deployment to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In keeping with our past traditions of extending unswerving support to United Nations peacekeeping efforts, we will do our utmost to contribute to the efforts of the international community to realize sustainable peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Our personnel in the field would like to see the Mission be successful so that they can take pride in their contribution to the cause of peace.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate our commitment to the progress and prosperity of the Democratic Republic of the Congo as well as of the continent of Africa.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of South Africa. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kumalo (South Africa): Over the past few weeks, the media worldwide was reporting negative stories about the United Nations having sent an inadequate peacekeeping mission to Sierra Leone. One positive story about the situation in Africa was on the fact-finding visit by the Security Council to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and neighbouring countries in search of a solution that may help bring peace to the Great Lakes region. My delegation would like to commend the Security Council for having made this important visit, and we hope that this visit will bring about an understanding in the Council that will eventually lead to an early deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the

Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) in the country.

Perhaps the most welcome news was the signing of the status-of-forces agreement between the United Nations and the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope this agreement opens the way for the United Nations to deploy peacekeepers in the Democratic Republic of the Congo without any hindrance.

South Africa remains committed to conflict resolution in our region. Together with partners in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC), our country was engaged in the behind-the-scenes negotiations to bring about peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, which resulted in the Lusaka Peace Agreement. As the United Nations begins to prepare to send peacekeeping troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo, South Africa has offered to join in supporting MONUC. We are pleased that the Department of Peacekeeping Operations is now engaged with our Government in finding ways in which my country can make a useful contribution to MONUC.

We must be realistic about what phase II of MONUC can accomplish. The primary tasks for MONUC will be to inject much-needed confidence into the peace process by monitoring the ceasefire and devising plans for a phase III deployment of United Nations peacekeepers. This planning must include a realistic framework and timetable for disarmament, demobilization, reintegration and resettlement. The search for long-term peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo cannot succeed as long as there are armed groups everywhere.

However, sending troops to the Democratic Republic of the Congo can only be the first step towards achieving peace in that troubled land. The bitter reality is that, in the end, the United Nations may not be able to mobilize the ideal size of peacekeeping force that a country as large as the Democratic Republic of the Congo may actually need. Therefore, my delegation believes that the contribution to peace coming out of the real political settlement to be reached through the inter-Congolese dialogue will be critical for creating stability in that country. South Africa has given assistance to Sir Ketumile Masire, the former President of Botswana, who is coordinating the inter-Congolese dialogue. We urge other countries to do the same, and we thank those that have already done so.

It is now left to our collective will to muster the political and material resources for a speedy deployment of MONUC phase II, as mandated by Security Council resolution 1291 (2000). The parties to the conflict themselves frequently expressed to the visiting Security Council mission that the deployment of MONUC phase II is crucial to sustaining the ceasefire. In our view, a speedy deployment will also give hope to the people of the Congo who have been left at the mercy of their tormentors.

South Africa agrees with the observation in the report that recent negative experiences encountered by the United Nations in Sierra Leone must not be allowed to derail our efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. While we cannot wish away the reality of the setbacks suffered in Sierra Leone, we can arm ourselves with valuable lessons learned. Sierra Leone has confirmed the lessons from Bosnia and elsewhere that it is important to send our troops with an appropriate mandate that takes account of the actual conditions in the area of deployment. It is equally critical to equip United Nations troops with the appropriate resources to carry out their mandate. If all of these things are put in place, we will have a realistic chance of ensuring the long-term success of MONUC.

The international community cannot afford to fail the Congolese people in their search for a lasting peace. Simultaneously, the international community cannot fail to recognize the responsibility of the Congolese people themselves to lay the foundations for their own much-needed peace.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Botswana. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mmualefe (Botswana): Let me thank you, Sir, for convening this important meeting. I wish also to convey our gratitude to the members of the Security Council mission that visited the Democratic Republic of the Congo recently for their comprehensive report. We are convinced that such visits by the Council members are vital to the work of this body and that they can contribute immensely to the enhancement of peace processes whenever undertaken in a timely fashion and with clear objectives, as was the case with the visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The report on the Security Council mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo acknowledges that the ceasefire voluntarily agreed to by the parties to the conflict in that country continues generally to hold. This is welcome news to us. We have also been informed that in addition to concluding a status-of-forces agreement, the head of State of the Democratic Republic of the Congo has personally undertaken to ensure full cooperation by his Government with the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC).

Paragraph 70 of the report states in part that

> "The requirement for a professional ceasefire monitoring and verification force as mandated in resolution 1291 (2000) is self-evident. Each of the five Presidents consulted on this visit was unequivocal in his appeal for rapid deployment, and apprehensive about the sustainability of the ceasefire without it. The desperation of the Congolese people, whose suffering the mission could for the most part only imagine, clearly demands an international response". (*S/2000/416*)

The Republic of Botswana could not agree more with that precise analysis. We have urged the Council before to consider deploying speedily in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Even if conditions may not be 100 per cent conducive to a United Nations peacekeeping deployment, we believe that enough effort has been put in by the parties to the conflict to deserve the assistance of the international community. By continuously calling on the parties to abide by their obligations without an effective peacekeeping presence on the ground, we run the risk of allowing the precarious peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to unravel. We would therefore strongly urge the Council to heed the appeal of the regional leaders to deploy peacekeepers expeditiously.

We are aware that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo is a complex and difficult one. That gives us all the more reason to believe that the presence of peacekeepers will go a long way towards enhancing mutual confidence among the parties. In the same breath, we wish to urge our brethren in the conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo to live by their promises to cooperate with MONUC and, most important, to ensure the safety and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel.

We wish to make a solemn appeal to the parties to the inter-Congolese dialogue to utilize the good offices of the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, to chart a fruitful path for their future. The onus is on every one of them to ensure the productive outcome of their dialogue. We wish to repeat here once more that the facilitator can do only as much as the Congolese themselves are prepared to achieve. There is no doubt in our mind that Sir Ketumile is driven by no motivation other than to assist the Congolese in achieving an outcome they desire for their country.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Zambia. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Daka (Zambia): My delegation would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting on the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. In the same vein, I would like to commend the Security Council for undertaking a mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The meetings that members of the mission had with the leadership and other leading players in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and those held with the leaders of the neighbouring countries visited have, we hope, enhanced the Security Council's understanding and appreciation of the situation on the ground.

The report presented to the Council by Ambassador Richard Holbrooke of the United States, who headed the mission, gives us hope and encouragement. It is clear from the report that all the signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement are prepared to honour their commitments towards the full implementation of the peace process. We note in this regard the eagerness of the signatories to implement the Lusaka process.

The recent signing of the status-of-forces agreement and the progress made so far in the implementation of the plan for the disengagement of forces presents the Security Council with the opportunity to fully and immediately deploy phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC). It is important that this be done without further delay in order to avoid creating a vacuum.

With regard to the inter-Congolese dialogue, my delegation would like to stress the need to urgently provide the necessary financial and logistical support to Sir Ketumile Masire, the neutral facilitator, to enable him to undertake his important task in the peace process. The holding of the inter-Congolese dialogue is indispensable to the successful implementation of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have endured a great deal of suffering. The international community needs to respond urgently to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in order to enable the people in that country to lead a normal life. We strongly believe that the deployment of phase II of MONUC could be a start in achieving that objective. The time to act is now.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker is the representative of Swaziland. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mamba (Swaziland): Allow me, Mr. President, on behalf of the delegation of the Kingdom of Swaziland, to extend my congratulations to you on your assumption of the presidency of this important organ for the month of May and to thank you for convening this meeting of the Council to consider the report on the Security Council mission visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. I also extend our thanks to Ambassador Holbrooke for his introduction of the report on the mission this morning and for his able leadership of the mission during its visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

A little over four months ago, under the presidency of the United States, the Security Council convened to consider the question relating to the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. That meeting was graced by the presence and participation of heads of State from the region. During that meeting, the heads of State made it clear that the Lusaka peace process had reached a stalemate and that there was an urgent need for it to be supported in order for its ultimate goal to be realized. The recent fact-finding visit to the region by the Security Council mission is but a fulfilment of the desire expressed by the leaders of the region in January that urgent action be taken by the international community to bring durable peace to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and bears testimony to the fact that the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo have suffered long enough and that the international community must act now. Further inaction will only serve to worsen the situation. It is with this concern in mind that my delegation welcomes and considers the visit of the Security Council's mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a clear expression of the Security Council's commitment to the strengthening of the peace process in the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

We welcome the mission's efforts to harmonize relations between the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the Government in Kinshasa, as demonstrated by the signing of the status-of-forces agreement on 4 May. We are convinced that this agreement will be crucial in ensuring the effectiveness of MONUC and that eventually it will be pivotal to the deployment of phase II of MONUC, the success of which will be a major milestone in the peace process.

My delegation is disturbed to learn that the inter-Congolese dialogue, a vital and critical component of the peace process, is beset with difficulties, including lack of funds and logistical support. We join those who have spoken before us in encouraging those that have pledged funds in support of the efforts of the facilitator, Sir Ketumile Masire, to make them available without further delay. We cannot agree more with the mission's observation that protracted discussions over the venue of the dialogue should not be allowed to delay the talks' being launched as expeditiously as possible.

The report further addresses the current circumstances of peacekeeping in Africa and elsewhere, with particular emphasis on the Sierra Leone tragedy, about the deployment of peacekeepers before a conflict has run its course. My delegation fully supports the recommendations of the mission that the developments in Sierra Leone should not be used as a yardstick for future deployments of this nature in the continent and that the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo must be viewed on its own merits. We are therefore in favour of the view that the Secretary-General, acting within the confines of resolution 1291 (2000), should solicit credible assurances from the parties to the conflict for the security and freedom of movement of United Nations and other related personnel.

The President *(spoke in Chinese)*: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Portugal. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Brito (Portugal): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union. The Central and Eastern European countries associated with the European Union — Bulgaria, the Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Slovenia — and the associated countries Cyprus, Malta and Turkey align themselves with this statement.

The European Union is pleased to again have the opportunity to express its views on the evolving situation in the Great Lakes region, and in particular on the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We commend the efforts of the Security Council, notably through its valuable recent mission to Kinshasa and Lusaka, and we welcome and endorse the recommendations contained in its report. The European Union hopes that its recommendations will lead to effective progress being achieved on the ground. However, we remain concerned that the parties have not yet shown the necessary commitment to implement fully their obligations, and we cannot avoid having the impression that some of the issues we need to address here today have been addressed before, without significant progress being achieved on the ground.

The European Union is strongly committed to the implementation of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and welcomes recent developments, notably the Kampala disengagement plan and the last summit of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), in Algiers. However, strong political will and unequivocal commitment from the parties is necessary to guarantee peaceful implementation. Recent events in Kisangani demonstrate the fragility of the present ceasefire. It is therefore incumbent upon this Council to maintain diplomatic and political pressure on the belligerent parties to comply with their agreed commitments, building on the success of the statement agreed by the Security Council mission with the parties on the ground.

The European Union reaffirms its willingness to continue to support the Joint Military Commission (JMC), the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) and the rapid deployment of its phase II, provided that the parties give the necessary guarantees for it to carry out its mandate effectively. I recall in this regard that the European Union has already provided the amount of 1.2 million euros in support of the JMC.

The European Union reiterates its deep concern at the ongoing illegal exploitation of natural resources, in particular minerals, in violation of the sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We welcome the Secretary-General's proposal for the creation of an expert panel, as mentioned in Security Council resolution 1291 (2000).

The European Union reaffirms its strong support for the inter-Congolese dialogue, a key element of the restoration of the rule of law, democracy and the national sovereignty of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. We hope that the inter-Congolese dialogue will be fully transparent, representative and free of all external interference. We fully support the work being carried out by former President Sir Ketumile Masire and are considering further ways of assisting him in discharging his difficult task.

We are all well aware of the number and complexity of the political, economic and social factors at the root of the conflict in the Great Lakes region of Africa. For progress to be achieved, a continued realistic, integrated and coherent approach by the international community, using different types of instruments appropriate to the prevailing circumstances, needs to be maintained. To this end, the European Union's envoy to the Great Lakes region has continued to work with the parties, other mediators and the United Nations to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of the international community's efforts. In this light, the European Union believes that it is appropriate to continue to consider the idea of a conference on peace, security, democracy and development in the Great Lakes region, to be organized by the OAU and the United Nations, whose preparatory work should start as soon as the main elements of the Lusaka agreement have been implemented.

The European Union will work with MONUC and the JMC, together with the parties to the Lusaka Agreement, other donors, the United Nations, the World Bank and interested African countries on options and possible solutions for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of forces involved in the armed conflict, including non-statutory forces. The

European Union also remains committed to continuing to work within the European Union/Southern African Development Community working group on illicit trafficking in small arms and light weapons to prevent arms from flowing into conflict zones in the Great Lakes region.

The European Union is also committed to providing humanitarian assistance and assistance for the return and reintegration of refugees and displaced persons and to adopting specific measures for the regions most affected by the conflict.

The President *(spoke in Chinese)*: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of the United Republic of Tanzania. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mwakawago (United Republic of Tanzania): The United Republic of Tanzania joins others in welcoming the report presented by Ambassador Holbrooke on the visit to the Democratic Republic of the Congo by the Security Council mission. The visit itself was, for us, a clear determination by the Council to make a real difference in the aspirations and hopes of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for peace and stability for development.

The report demonstrates that the mission has succeeded in three ways. First, it has vindicated the continued significance of the Lusaka Peace Agreement as the only viable framework for peace in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. Secondly, it has underscored the urgency on the part of the United Nations of the deployment of military observers, as provided under the terms of Security Council resolution 1291 (2000). Lastly, in spite of some setbacks, the commitment of all the parties to the Lusaka Agreement and resolution 1291 (2000) was, without exception, reaffirmed.

These were no small achievements in the span of one week. Those who had questions on whether such a visit was really needed would undoubtedly find comfort in the mission briefing. It all comes down to one critical undertaking: deployment of phase II of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should not be delayed any longer.

Quite rightly the mission report notes that the events in Sierra Leone have cast a shadow over the mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, it also makes a valid observation which we cannot lose sight of: the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has its own unique characteristics, and the peacekeeping operation there must be judged on its own merits. Unlike Sierra Leone, the Democratic Republic of the Congo does not have a Foday Sankoh. All warring parties have supported, indeed urged, the presence of the United Nations. In this regard even in Sierra Leone we should act firmly to suppress the likes of Mr. Sankoh and his wayward rebels who have violated the will of the people of Sierra Leone, of Africa and of the international community.

Consequently, what underlines the broad support for the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the region is the need for swift and determined action to ensure implementation of the Lusaka Agreement. Without a doubt, the mission has noted some fragile aspects. But we do not, and we must not, see these aspects as undermining the relevance of the Agreement. Setbacks ought to have been expected from the outset. Our challenge is to continue urging the parties to walk down the road to peace and security for the people and countries of the region to which they are all committed.

In that context we note, and welcome, the parties' reaffirmation of their support to MONUC. The United Nations needs, therefore, to speed up its contribution in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The meeting of the visiting mission with Congolese civil society, religious groups and political parties vindicated the support of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo for rapid deployment of phase II of MONUC. That the mission to Kananga, comprised of Ambassador Andjaba of Namibia, Ambassador van Walsum of the Netherlands and Ambassador Greenstock of the United Kingdom, was "struck by the great warmth of their reception by the citizens and their clear desire for peace" is foretelling of the expectations of the United Nations on the part of the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo.

The mission was rightly concerned about the recent fighting in Kisangani. We welcome the fact that the mission had the opportunity to raise their concerns with Presidents Kagame of Rwanda and Museveni of Uganda and managed to broker an agreement between them to stop the fighting. We also welcome that the two Presidents agreed to institute measures designed to begin a phased withdrawal in accordance with the

disengagement plan of 8 April. As a result of a follow-up summit meeting by Presidents Kagame and Museveni, hosted by my President, His Excellency Mr. Benjamin Mkapa, in Mwanza, northern Tanzania, on 14 May, we are now even more optimistic about the commitment of the two Presidents to the disengagement plan. Needless to say, the urgent deployment of MONUC in the area is of critical importance.

We will not tire in our calls for continued and sustained support of the office of the facilitator. President Sir Ketumile Masire's noble effort should not fail for want of support or assistance. In a similar vein, we urge the Congolese people to embrace his efforts in the interests of comity and peace for their people and country.

Our delegation cannot hide its deep concern about allegations of serious human rights violations in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, particularly in eastern Congo. The apparent acknowledgement of an instance in which a number of persons — indeed, women — were buried alive is in itself shocking, to say the least. That what was at dispute was not the factual incident but the number is horrifying. That "it only concerned three women" and that "the other side did it too" is an admission that this body cannot condone. We must condemn it as we continue to demand a thorough investigation and ultimate culpability. We have often enough demanded that impunity should not go unpunished. Our reported outrage at the victimization of innocent and unarmed civilians, especially women and children, must be matched with firm action.

The Lusaka Peace Agreement and the United Nations process set in motion by Council resolution 1291 (2000) can interact effectively. It would be a tragedy if the people of the Democratic Republic of the Congo were led to believe that a weary international community on peacekeeping cannot be counted upon in their hour of need. A legitimate peace process is in motion. If this Council and the United Nations are to continue to be relevant to Africa, then it is imperative that the needs of people of Sierra Leone, Angola and, in this particular case, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, to mention but a few, must be taken on board.

A ray of hope is on the horizon. We urge the Security Council to translate hopes into concrete action.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Zimbabwe. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Jokonya (Zimbabwe): Like all my colleagues who spoke before me, I would like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. The timing of today's meeting, coming as it does immediately after the release of the report of the Security Council mission to the Democratic Republic of the Congo from 4 to 8 May 2000, could not be more than perfect, and Zimbabwe regards it a privilege to pronounce itself over an issue of such import before the Council.

My delegation takes this opportunity to reiterate the sentiments expressed by President Robert Mugabe during his meeting with the Security Council team in Harare on 6 May. President Mugabe informed the Council team that now was the opportune moment for the United Nations to deploy peacekeepers in order to prevent any further unravelling of the situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. According to President Mugabe, the deployment of the United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) should not be contingent upon progress or the lack of it in the inter-Congolese dialogue, since the conflict remained uppermost in people's minds.

Besides associating himself with the United Nations position on the issue of the illegal exploitation of the natural resources of the Democratic Republic of the Congo, President Mugabe also submitted that Zimbabwe would extend its full cooperation to any expert panel created by the Security Council, including in the areas of the Democratic Republic of the Congo under its control.

On a sad note, while the Security Council mission was visiting the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Corporal Foday Sankoh's Revolutionary United Front rebels flagrantly violated the ceasefire in Sierra Leone and in the process rekindled assertions by afro-pessimists that Africa was a lost cause and that the continent could not be saved. Some so-called experts on Africa have feverishly taken to the media to remind the West of Somalia and the "Mogadishu syndrome" — a perception that Africa's civil wars are somewhat different and more intractable than those in other

regions. I do not need to remind the Council that this perception is not borne out by experience. The impression I got from reading the New York tabloids was: "Let Africa drift in her own sea of misery and hopelessness. It is of no concern to us."

Sadly, the media, which should be playing a very important role in awakening the conscience of the international community in order to draw its attention to needy peoples, last week wittingly helped foster a misperception that Africa is a continent caught in an unbreakable downward spiral. In spite of this negative publicity by the media about events in Africa, my delegation is glad that Article 24 of the United Nations Charter clearly states that the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security rests with the Security Council, and not with the media. This Article arose from the fact that the international community, having seen two world wars, is not prepared to descend again to that depth of human loss, genocide and holocaust. It is in conformity with this role that the United Nations has tried over the years of its existence to intervene in all areas of conflict that clearly go beyond the ability of the parties involved to solve. The aim is to save lives.

Let me observe that some regions are more fortunate than others in their history and geography. My own continent of Africa has witnessed more United Nations peacekeeping failures than any other. Some of us are still haunted by vivid memories of occasions when the United Nations found it easier to walk away from Africa in its hour of need than to mandate and equip a mission that could have saved the day for us all. On more numerous occasions, the United Nations has found excuses to drag its feet while African situations have flared up. Even in the cases where African subregional arrangements have stepped in to contain situations in anticipation of Security Council assistance, the United Nations has stood aloof. The peace opportunities in Sierra Leone and the Democratic Republic of the Congo, created by regional initiatives through the Lomé Agreement and the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement, respectively, should not be allowed to unravel.

Last year, repeated pleas by African leaders for a robust Chapter VII peacekeeping mandate in Sierra Leone were spurned and, in hindsight, it has become clear that half-hearted efforts seriously undermine the credibility of the United Nations and call into question its commitment to peacekeeping, particularly in Africa. The Sierra Leone case has demonstrated that all successful United Nations operations depend on clear and unambiguous mandates that equally provide the resources to support the missions.

The heads of State of the States parties to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement addressed the Security Council, under the presidency of Richard Holbrooke of the United States during the "month of Africa" in January 2000, and affirmed their unwavering commitment to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. It is now almost half a year since the heads of State convened in New York and yet the deployment of MONUC has not yet been effected. This is a cause of concern to those suffering civilians in the areas of conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The report before us is a reiteration of the belligerents' commitment to the peace process. We therefore urge the Security Council immediately to deploy MONUC observers, who will be able to identify and verify parties that break the ceasefire, thereby enabling the Security Council to impose costs on those bent on pursuing the military option.

Unlike Somalia, where the United Nations encountered a collapsed State with no Government to account for its morally reprehensible behaviour, in the Democratic Republic of the Congo we have six States that are Members of the United Nations. Surely the United Nations has means and ways to discourage wayward behaviour by its Member States. The allied forces of the Southern African Development Community are ready to withdraw from the Democratic Republic of the Congo in fulfilment of their Lusaka ceasefire obligations and we hope that other signatories of the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement will oblige in like manner. My delegation further implores the Security Council to deploy a peacekeeping mission with a robust Chapter VII mandate that will complete the work of phase II of MONUC.

History has taught us that any enforcement action requires the deployment of a force that is overwhelming enough, both in numbers and in capability, to force warring parties to accept terms laid down in a peace agreement.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Rwanda. I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Mutaboba (Rwanda): As this is the first time I have taken the floor since the most recent open meeting of the Security Council, I wish to express my delegation's delight at seeing you, Sir, in the presidency. We also wish to congratulate your predecessor, Ambassador Fowler, for a job well done, and the same appreciation goes to the whole membership around this table for a sustained effort in the search for peace and security in the world. We can only express a strong wish to see you, Mr. President, redoubling your efforts and vigilance to avoid such surprises as we have encountered before.

The Government of Rwanda is very grateful to the Security Council for the mission led by the very able Ambassador Holbrooke. It was my pleasure to welcome the delegation to Kigali, and its members are right to say that we had frank discussions. What they forgot to say is that we were sometimes brutally frank in order to make sure that telling the truth should supersede the speeches we often hear from those trying to conceal it in order to feel good.

President Kagame asked me to thank all members of the mission, bearing in mind that he was able to share and to make concrete proposals that led to solving the tragic and regrettable incidents we did not start in Kisangani. None of us had the deliberate intention of getting local civilians hurt in the first place, nor has that ever been our Government's intention at all.

Rwanda is still committed to the Lusaka Ceasefire Agreement. We believe it is the sole viable framework for achieving peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region. Reference to the incident in Kisangani as a deliberate violation by some of the Lusaka Agreement is totally wrong and should not be used as yet another delaying tactic from some parties to slow momentum. We need ever more pragmatic progressive approaches, such as those proposed by President Kagame and agreed to by President Museveni and the Security Council mission. I am happy to provide the members of the Council with a copy of the latest joint statement on the demilitarization of Kisangani and, on the instructions of my Government, it may be circulated as a document of the Security Council at members' earliest convenience.

Peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region cannot come our way as long as we fix our eyes on the Democratic Republic of the Congo alone. We need to see the Democratic Republic of the Congo as part of a region in crisis, address the root causes and do this individually and collectively. That is why we still believe that there can be no peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region until evil armed forces are disarmed, demobilized, demilitarized, rehabilitated and reintegrated into their respective societies. We have been hearing some rumours leading us to believe that some countries may be planning to take our citizens to their respective countries. We appreciate their hospitality, but none of them likes our people better than we do. Experience shows that those already repatriated, rehabilitated and reintegrated are happy to be home, sweet home. They themselves have had a chance to say that killing is wrong and should be punished. If you take them to your countries, they will miss this opportunity forever to repent and to reconcile themselves with their society. Those trying to take them should think about that. It is imperative that we find a durable solution to the problem of these armed groups.

Demilitarization and demobilization can be done peacefully and voluntarily, we agree. However, there is a blatant need for those forces and their supporters to cooperate for it to be done peacefully and voluntarily. Otherwise it will be a mere contradiction. The experience of refugee camps in the then eastern Zaire is still vivid in our memories: the international community had failed in the name of an idealistic, peaceful and voluntary process. We should learn from that, and from the success of the repatriation of over 2 million refugees who were then costing the international community over $1 million a day.

The demobilization and repatriation of members of the Interahamwe, the ex-Rwandan Armed Forces and other similar forces is a prerequisite to a successful return of peace and security in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in the region. Once this is seriously considered, and in the spirit of Lusaka, then the inter-Congolese dialogue may be a factor for overall lasting peace and security within and across the Democratic Republic of the Congo's borders. Law and order are necessary for political dialogue. The political dialogue itself brings respect for human and citizen's rights. That is why MONUC needs to be deployed without further ado. That is why we strongly believe

that President Sir Ketumile Masire needs to be supported both politically and financially.

Peace is not a one-way business. You have peace and you give it to your family, your neighbours, your nation and the whole world. It is returned to you, and the cycle continues. Sovereignty is a two-way business, too. You cannot scream for your national sovereignty while blasting your neighbours. You do not solve matters by singing the same old tune all the time: you use your imagination and become .creative; you compose songs expressing the mood of the time and you keep the momentum going all the way through. This is what is needed today in search for peace and security in the world. It is the United Nations duty as the world body, and it is ours as Members who support our Organization.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I would like to take this opportunity to thank in one statement all speakers who have addressed kind words for me.

There are no further speakers on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 4.35 p.m.